the communities in which there was not much of co-operation. Finally, the Member prayed for loans being granted to Ezhavas on easy terms for the development of industries.

Dewan's reply.—You have made three main requests.

You say that Ezhavas are not represented on certain branches of the public service and on certain representative bodies. It is not possible to give representation to every community in each and every organisation. The claims of all communities are considered and representation is given to the most deserving as far as possible.

In regard to co-operation, you seem to object to Co-operative Societies being started by particular communities. There is, no doubt, that Co-operative Societies in which all communities are represented are ideal Co-operative Societies. But, if particular communities show greater activity in regard to co-operative organisation than other communities and start societies on a communal basis, I do not see why it should be objected to. It is better to have such Co-operative Societies than to have no Co-operative Societies at all. Ezhavas may start Co-operative Societies and every facility will be afforded to them.

The suggestion in regard to Honorary Registrars will be referred to the Registrar of Co-operative Societies. He has already been asked to select Honorary Registrars to do propaganda work and a certain amount of money has been earmarked in the budget to meet their travelling allowance. When the Registrar makes his recommendation for the appointment of Honorary Assistant Registrars, Government will be glad to include Ezhavas among them, if there are persons duly qualified to hold that post.

In regard to the Economic Development Board, it was started only 18 months ago. It is not possible to give representation to all communities on a single Board. I hope the Board will be a body which will continue to do useful work for some time and I have no doubt that an Ezhava will sit on it in due time.

54. Hardships caused to the people by the auction sale of lime-shells as a State monopoly.

Mr. Kanakku Padmanabahan Sankaran (Member, Karunagapallai Taluk) said that the subject of the lease of the right to collect lime-shells was of so serious a nature that he felt fully justified in bringing it forward as a separate representation to the Assembly. His objections to the lease were:—

(1) that it was difficult to get quicklime for building and manurial purposes;

(2) that the lease affected prejudicially the ryots of Kuttanad;

(3) that the people who were engaged in the trade were bereft of their means of livelihood;

(4) that the price of quicklime had increased considerably : and

(5) that the income to the Government from that source was not commensurate with the increase in the price of quicklime, with the result that Government would be losers by the new arrangement in the long run.

The Member, therefore, requested that the Government might be pleased to cancel the lease.

Dewan's reply.—I have already replied to a representation from Mr. Narayana Aiyar, Member for the Ambalapuzha taluk, on this very subject. So as far we are able to gather, we have not been instrumental in raising the price of lime-shells in any place except Quilon, where the price has gone up by half a *fanam* per *para*. The effect of the measure will be watched, and if it is found that the sale of lime-shells as a monopoly prejudicially affects the ryots, suitable measures will be adopted to remedy the evil.

55. Possibilities of the Co-operative movement in Travancore.

Mr. S. Manuel (Member, Nominated) began by thanking the Government on behalf of the Co-operative Societies of the State and on behalf of the Y. M. C. A.,

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which, he said, was the only non-official agency which had been taking an active interest in the propagation of the movement.

He first dwelt at length on the advantages of the co-operative movement, and explained how the several countries in the West had availed themselves of the movement to stop usury and indebtedness among the agricultural classes and how the movement had been used as a basis for the economic salvation of the masses in those countries.

The Member then detailed the nature of the movement in the State. He observed that, as the State of Travancore was mainly agricultural, every effort should be made to improve its agriculture and the condition of the ryots. Although the necessary efforts were being put forth by the Government in that direction, it could not be said that the condition of the ryots was satisfactory. He pointed out that the one great objection to the system of agricultural loans now in operation was that the consequential relief did not reach the cultivators who were most in need of it and at the time when they needed them, and that the benefit of the scheme came to be practically confined to the more substantial and well-to-do cultivators for whom such a measure was far from indispensable. With a view to avoid that evil he suggested that such loans might be given to poor ryots through Co-operative Societies wherever possible. In connection with the grant of agricultural loans, it was desirable that the landed security offered for such loans should be inspected by the agricultural officers before action was taken.

The Member then made the following proposals for the further progress of the movement.

(1) The strengthening of the Central Bank and the speedy organisation of other central or district financing banks.

(2) The adoption of a more liberal policy by the Government in financing Co-operative Banks by making larger deposits and by encouraging Municipalities and other local organisations to deposit their surplus funds in Co-operative Societies.

(3) The raising of the rate of interest on deposits in Co-operative Societies to 8½ or 9 per cent. to attract larger local deposits.

(4) Utilising Co-operative Societies for the distribution of agricultural loans wherever possible allowing a small commission of 1 per cent. to such societies on the amounts distributed by them.

(5) Making provision for the frequent inspection of Societies by the formation of Supervising Unions.

(6) Enlisting the hearty co-operation of Agricultural and Veterinary Inspectors in organising seed unions and cattle improvement societies.

(7) Setting apart at least one Inspector for non-credit work.

(8) Formation of Irrigation Societies as in the Punjab and Bengal.

(9) Imparting a thorough knowledge of the principles of co-operation to all the officers of the Development Department.

(10) Enlisting a large number of honorary workers and encouraging them by means of grants-in-aid.

(11) Organising a course of lectures for students in colleges and schools and among women.

(12) Holding of training classes for Panchayats in suitable circles.

(13) Holding of annual local or divisional conferences.

(14) Awarding of prizes to the Secretaries of a few efficient societies.

(15) Preferring the lands of the members of Co-operative Societies in selecting plots for giving demonstrations in improved methods of cultivation.

(16) Formation of an electorate of the Co-operative Societies to send one or two members to the Legislative Council.

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Dewan's reply.—Your many suggestions will be referred to the Registrar of Co-operative Societies and we shall see what can be done. As you observe, there is no sphere of human activity where co-operation cannot be beneficial. Everything depends upon the spirit in which the work is done and the enthusiasm with which it is carried out. You say that, in regard to agricultural loans, the poor are experiencing difficulties. This has been mentioned by more than one member in the Assembly. You say that the landed security offered for the loans may be inspected by agricultural officers. That is not necessary. The rules do not require that such lands should be inspected by agricultural officers. Inspection by departmental officers is provided for only in the case of machinery, *i. e.*, where machinery is sought to be installed or where the loan is required under the new Industrial Loan Rules. It is only there that the advice of an expert is required. In the case of ordinary applications for loans, the value of the land is determined by the revenue officers. Applications may, no doubt, be received by agricultural officers, but they will have to be sent on to the revenue officers for disposal.

Your suggestion as regards the grant of loans through Co-operative Societies is a useful one. The Registrar of Co-operative Societies has not yet made any such suggestion. I shall ask him to examine the matter and make definite proposals to Government. By the adoption of this [illegible] some of the difficulties pointed out by you, as, for example, that of finding s[illegible]security for the money advanced, might be overcome, as the security provided [illegible]Co-operative Societies is much better than the security given by individuals.

You complain of want of sufficient funds to finance the Co-operative Societies. But some days back, Mr. G. Paramesvaran Pillai, the Secretary of the Trivandrum Central Co-operative Bank, was telling me that there was not sufficient demand from societies for the money in the bank and he was asking me for permission to deposit the bank's unutilised funds in the treasury savings banks. I cannot reconcile these conflicting statements. If what both you and Mr. G. Paramesvaran Pillai tell me is true, it reflects a sad state of affairs. It shows that the primary societies and the Central Co-operative Bank are not in sufficient touch with each other.

The Agricultural Department has already arranged to sell manures through the agency of Co-operative Societies. Co-operative Societies can maintain breed-bulls also. They can take lands for cultivation under the Land Colonisation Scheme. There is no limit to the activities of Co-operative Societies.

V. PUBLIC WORKS.

56. The institution of Village Irrigation (Agricultural) Boards.

Mr. M. C. Narayana Pillai B. A. (Member, Trivandrum Taluk) stated, at the outset, that agriculture was the earliest industry to be pursued in Travancore, and that, since it centred round food, it was the basic or mother industry. Although Government had recognised the importance of that industry and created a separate department for its development and expansion, the people in general were not quite satisfied with the results achieved till now, nor had the benefits of the department reached the masses. It was impossible for a Government to influence individually thousands of petty peasants who were themselves too isolated, too suspicious and too shy to accept new ideas and undertake experiments in new methods. Further, they were too poor and powerless to raise the best products or to get the better of the middle men and the best from the market. The remedy lay in the formation of an organisation which would act as an intermediary between the Government and the individual—an organisation which could be advised, educated, reasoned with and listened to, which could discuss the suggestions of the authorities and absorb new ideas, find courage and funds to undertake new methods, and combine both for the improvement of the products of their labour and for their prompt and advantageous sale.

The Member thought that the formation of Village Panchayats would not secure the end in view, as its scope was too wide and as it imposed an additional tax on the already heavily-taxed poor ryots. Hence he suggested the formation of village associations or boards for the purpose.

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